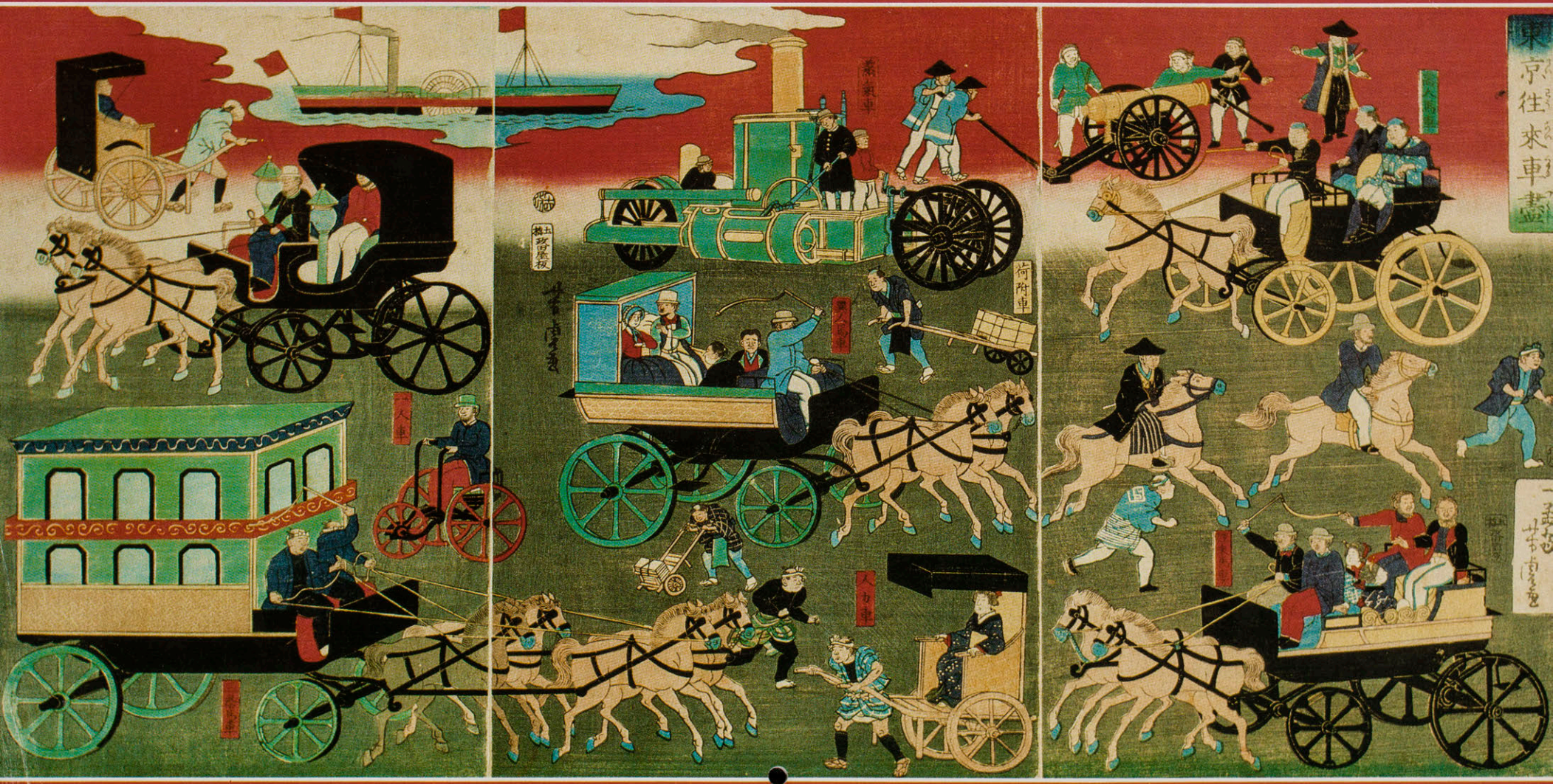
TERRA
VOL. 23, NO. 2
NOVEMBER · DECEMBER 1984

A CLOSE LOOK AT THE COLLECTIONS
Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

CALENDAR FOR 1985



A CLOSE LOOK AT THE COLLECTIONS

Collecting is one of the more prevalent traits of our society. At some time during our lifetime most of us have been consumed by the desire to collect. This may have manifested itself in our youth as a collection of tin soldiers, baseball cards, or all the aggies we could accumulate. Later, stamps, coins, match books, or doll house furnishings or dresses dominated our acquisition instincts. For some the need to collect wanes in their more mature years, but for many the passion remains throughout our lives. Indian pottery, fine woodworking tools, automobiles, Wedgewood, Chinese bronzes, gemstones, textiles, or French Impressionist paintings—all are grist for our desire to build a collection of our own.

For Western societies this very human trait led to the establishment of institutional collections, most often thought of today as museum collections but in the past more often collections of the church or state. While many of the great personal collections of the past formed the basis for museums, the latter generally transcend personal collections in their purpose and in their scope. Nevertheless, museums rely heavily upon the collecting instincts of individual donors who continue to provide significant additions to our institutions.

This issue of TERRA illustrates fourteen objects from our collections. Fourteen chosen from over fourteen million. The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is fortunate in having one of the most important museum collections in the country, one from which we can continually draw important and exciting pieces for our exhibition and education programs. It is our pleasure to be able to share a very few of these objects with you for the coming year.

Craig C. Black
Director

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County ranks third in the nation among natural history museums in size of collections. Over 14 million specimens and artifacts covering over 300 million years of earth's history are contained in its collections, including the largest catalogued vertebrate fossil collection in North America. Through the year, on-going exhibitions, education programs, lectures, and events such as the Annual Craft Fair in June and the Native American Festival in December are provided for the general public.

ADDRESS. 900 Exposition Boulevard, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, California 90007.

TELEPHONE. 213/744-3414; recorded information, 213/744-3411.

HOURS. Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

ADMISSION. $1.50 for adults; $.75 for students, children 5 to 17, and senior citizens 62 and older; children under 5 admitted free. Admission is free to Museum Members. Admission is free to the general public on the first Tuesday of each month.

TOURS. Guided and unguided tours for school classes are available from October through May by reservation only; reservations are not required at other times. For further information, call the Education Division, 213/744-3333. Tours for adult groups may be arranged by calling 213/744-3341.

MOVEABLE MUSEUM. Trained volunteers from the museum's Docent Roundtable give presentations in subjects related to the elementary school curriculum in schools and libraries in the Los Angeles area. The talks are illustrated with slides and artifacts from the museum's collections. Information and reservations may be obtained by calling the Education Division, 213/744-3344.

LENDING SERVICE. Historical objects, models, mounted animals, pictures, and slides are available for two-week loan periods to adults subscribing to the museum's Lending Service. The annual subscription fee is $5.00. The Lending Service is open from mid-September to mid-June; hours are Tuesday through Friday, 2 to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For further information, call the Education Division, 213/744-3345.

LIBRARIES. The Research Library is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. The Seaver Center for Western History Research is open on Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Wednesday and Friday from 1 to 4 p.m. For further information, call the Research Library, 213/744-3387, or the Seaver Center, 213/744-3359.

GROUND FLOOR CAFETERIA. The cafeteria and adjacent patio are open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Special meals may be arranged for tour groups and school classes. For further information, call 213/747-2089.

THE ETHNIC ARTS SHOP. This shop, located at the north entrance, offers distinctive, high-quality art and craft items from around the world, an impressive array of mineral specimens and bookends, and a selection of ethnic clothing and accessories. In addition, merchandise relating to current exhibits is showcased throughout the year. Members receive a 10 percent discount. For further information, call 213/744-3336.

THE BOOK SHOP. The Book Shop, which is located at the north entrance across from the Ethnic Arts Shop, carries an authoritative assortment of titles in all areas of natural history, a comprehensive selection of books on pre-Columbian Mesoamerica, and sections on early California and Los Angeles history. Also for sale are notecards, postcards, and posters. Members receive a 10 percent discount. For further information, call 213/744-3434.

THE DINOSAUR SHOP. Dinosaurs of all shapes and sizes decorate T-shirts, mugs, models, and posters in this colorful, new shop at the south entrance. The Dinosaur Shop also features a wide assortment of educational games, books, and toys for the young and young at heart. Members receive a 10 percent discount. For further information, call 213/744-3434.

PAGE MUSEUM OF LA BREA DISCOVERIES

The Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries documents the history and significance of the La Brea Pits—the richest source of Ice Age plant and animal fossils in the world. The museum features reconstructed skeletons of animals once trapped in the asphalt; visitors can watch staff members and volunteers work on fossil bones in the Paleontology Laboratory.

ADDRESS. 5801 Wilshire Boulevard, Hancock Park, Los Angeles, California 90036.

TELEPHONE. 213/857-6311, recorded information, 213/936-2230.

HOURS. Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

ADMISSION. $1.50 for adults; $.75 for students, children 5 to 17, and senior citizens 62 and older; children under 5 are admitted free. Museum Members are admitted free. Admission is free to the general public on the second Tuesday of each month. Admission to both the Page Museum and the nearby Los Angeles County Museum of Art is available at a reduced price with the Combined Admission Ticket, which may be purchased at either museum.

TOURS. School classes are only admitted to the museum with advance reservations. Guided tours of the museum and the tar pits are available for school classes and the general public. For further information and reservations, call the Tours Office Wednesday through Friday between 1 and 4 p.m. at 213/857-6306.

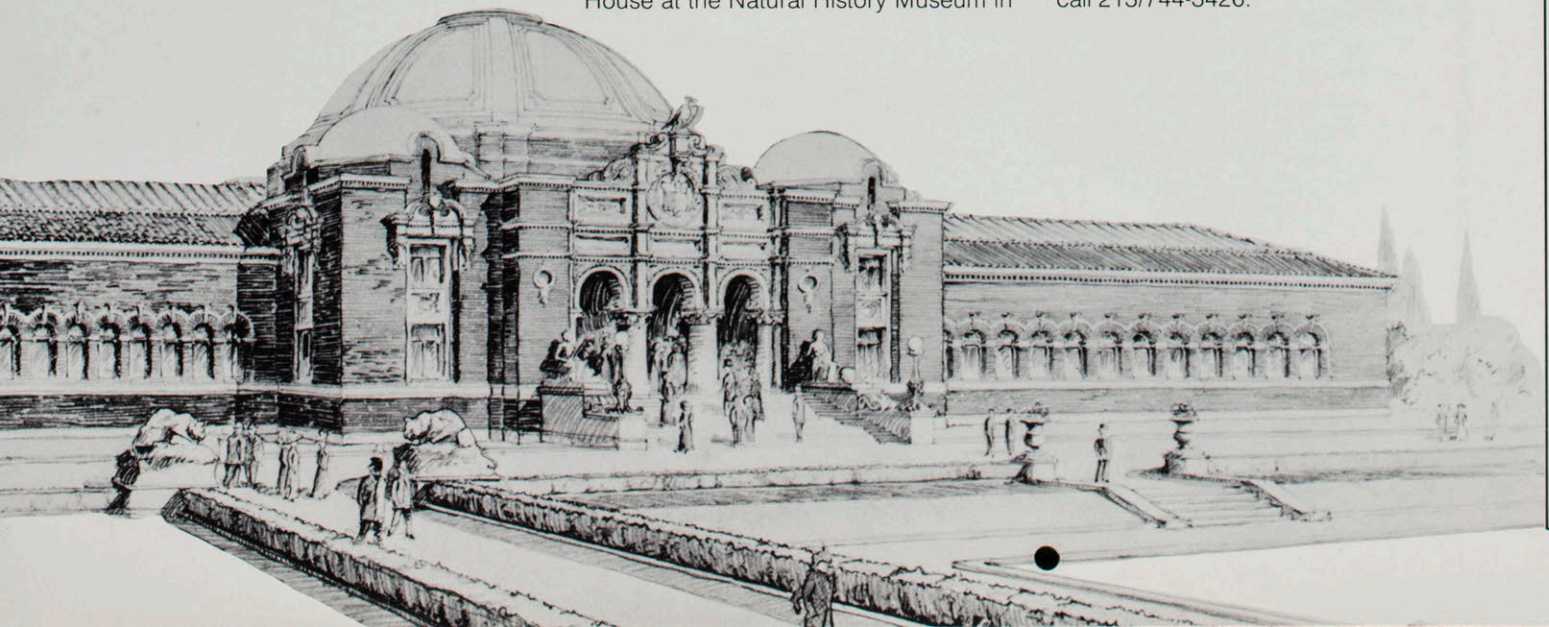
THE PAGE MUSEUM SHOP. The shop carries a wide selection of educational kits, models, games, puzzles, and toys for children and has a fine assortment of natural history books. Also for sale are mineral specimens and jewelry, large color postcards of the museum and its exhibits, and gifts for animal lovers. The shop is at the entrance to the museum and is open from 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Museum Members receive a 10 percent discount. For further information, call 213/931-5273.

MEMBERSHIP IN TWO GREAT MUSEUMS

Membership categories range in price from $20 to $1,000 per year. In addition to supporting two vital cultural institutions, membership in the Natural History Museum and Page Museum provides special benefits, including:

- Free admission to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County in Exposition Park *and* the George C. Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries in Hancock Park.
- A year's subscription to the award-winning *Terra* magazine.
- Invitations to special Members-only events, such as the behind-the-scenes Open House at the Natural History Museum in February.
- Opportunities to join science and history experts on unique and unusual trips all over the world.
- A 10 percent discount in the Ethnic Arts Shop, the New Natural History Book Store, and the Dinosaur Shop at the Natural History Museum and the Page Museum Gift Shop.
- Additional benefits for higher level memberships.

For further information, visit the Membership Office at the Natural History Museum or call 213/744-3426.



TERRA

THE MEMBERS' MAGAZINE
OF THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY
AND THE PAGE MUSEUM
OF LA BREA DISCOVERIES

VOL. 23, NO. 2 • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1984

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Printed by North Hollywood Printing Co., Inc.

Color separations by Graphic Arts Systems

Typography by Leonard Typographic Service

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ISSN 0040-3733



DECEMBER 1984



An automobile radiator ornament pressed in glass and impressed with the mark, *R. Lalique.* The ornament is shown on a 1927 McFarlan boat-tailed roadster. Art glass ornaments of this type were used on cars in the early part of this century. The museum collections include a number of vintage cars as well as automobile accessories, sales material, and repair manuals. Photographs by Dick Meier.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 HANUKKAH	20	21 FIRST DAY OF WINTER	22
23	24	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27	28	29
30	31					



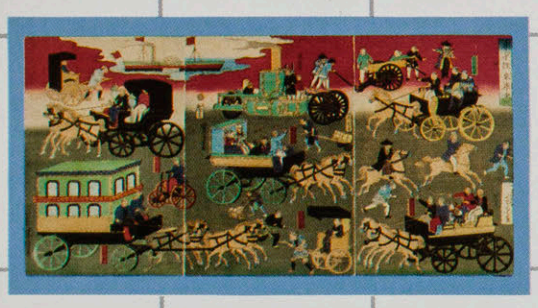
JANUARY 1985

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S BIRTHDAY	16	17	18	19
20	21 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S BIRTHDAY OBSERVED	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



Top: *Isocrinus oregonensis,* a fossil crinoid from northeastern Oregon. Crinoids or "sea lilies" are related to starfish and sea urchins. The extreme rarity of crinoids in rocks of Cenozoic age (less than 65 million years old) makes these beautifully preserved, complete fossil specimens from northwestern Oregon of great significance. This is one of the specimens in the museum's collection of about one million fossil invertebrates, many of which have formed the basis for important scientific research. The drawing (bottom) shows a crinoid collected live from the deep sea; its flowerlike calyx was gracefully attached by a long, flexible stalk to the sea floor. Photograph by Dick Meier. Drawing from the *Challenger* report, 1884.





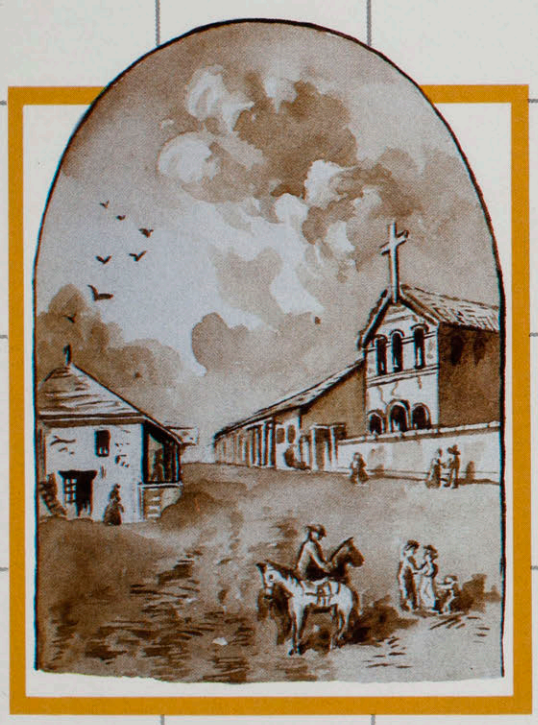
Japanese print entitled "Modes of Transportation" showing Western inventions brought to Japan in the nineteenth century. The print, dating from the period 1853-1880, is part of the Shearman collection of historical prints and maps, which is one of the many historical resources available to scholars through the museum's Seaver Center for Western History Research. Photographs by Dick Meier.

FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY	13	14 VALENTINE'S DAY	15	16
17	18 GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY OBSERVED	19	20 ASH WEDNESDAY	21	22 GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY	23
24	25	26	27	28		

RAMONA

MARCH



Detail of an art nouveau case design for *Ramona, A Story,* by Helen Hunt Jackson, and an original watercolor (circa 1920) that was probably created for an illustrated edition of the book. The cover, which is leather with gold stamping, may have been intended for a limited edition printing of the work. In addition to containing rare books, manuscripts, and iconographic materials such as these items, the museum's Research Library collections support the contemporary research of curatorial staff members. Photographs by Dick Meier.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18	19	20 FIRST DAY OF SPRING	21	22	23
24 PALM SUNDAY	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5 GOOD FRIDAY	6 PASSOVER
7 EASTER	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



"Pua-maka-nui" *(Hillebrandia sandwicensis),* a rare, endemic Hawaiian member of the begonia family that is found growing in damp, shaded places on some of the islands; plants such as this are pressed and stored flat in the museum's reference collection. The herbarium houses a fine collection of Hawaiian plants including some recently described species. In addition, important collections of fungi, lichens, and algae augment the museum's botany holdings. Photographs by Robert Gustafson (top) and Dick Meier (bottom).



MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 MOTHER'S DAY	13	14	15	16	17	18 ARMED FORCES DAY
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVED	28	29	30 MEMORIAL DAY	31	



Intricately woven human hair has been worked into the shape of the crescent moon, then mounted into gold fittings in this lady's brooch. Hair jewelry, which was fashioned either as forget-me-not emblems or as mourning remembrances of loved ones, was immensely popular in the nineteenth century. The crescent brooch, made around 1865 in Boston, is an especially fine example from the museum's costume and accessories collections. Photographs by Dick Meier.



JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 FLAG DAY	15
16 FATHER'S DAY	17	18	19	20	21 FIRST DAY OF SUMMER	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

The large, triangular, translucent windows in the wings of this moth immediately identify it as belonging to *Rothschildia*, a genus of giant silk moths. This specimen of the subspecies *Rothschildia erycina erycina* was photographed by the Napo River in northeastern Peru as it rested on the cocoon from which it had just emerged. Approximately 750,000 specimens in the museum's research collection of over 4 million insects are moths and butterflies, making it one of the largest collections of Lepidoptera in North America. Photographs by Charles L. Hogue.



JULY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



Shoulder bag from the Chippewa culture of the western Great Lakes region, circa 1890; the piece was given to the museum in 1936 by Lucille Taylor Pantazos. Bags of this type were not used for carrying items but were worn as symbols of wealth and prestige on ceremonial occasions. This is only one of more than 30,000 artifacts in the museum's ethnological collections, which are particularly rich in material from the New World. Photographs by Dick Meier.



AUGUST



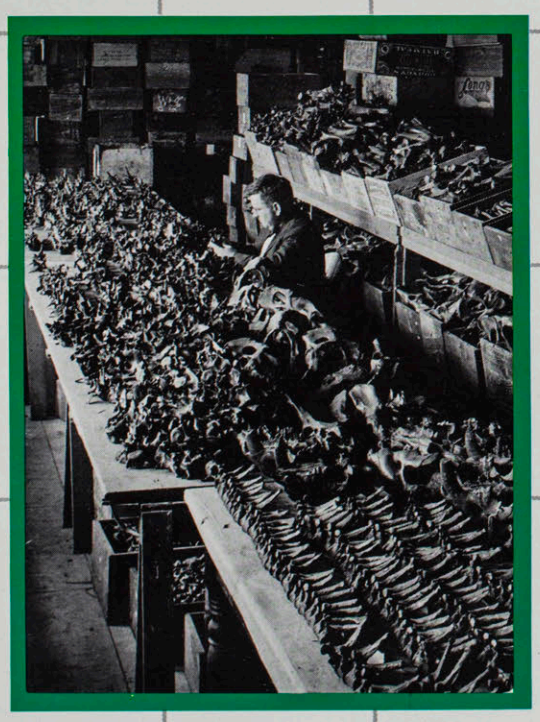
White Terns *(Gygis alba)* of Christmas Island, Republic of Kiribati, Central Pacific Ocean. Individuals of this species do not build nests: the two-week old chick shown here hatched from an egg laid on a tree branch; it will remain on the branch until it develops the feathers necessary for flight. Specimens of this and other seabirds are being added to the museum's ornithology collections in conjunction with research in the Central Pacific sponsored in part by the National Science Foundation. Photographs by Ralph W. and Elizabeth Anne Schreiber.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 LABOR DAY	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 ROSH HASHANAH	17	18	19	20	21
22 FIRST DAY OF AUTUMN	23	24	25 YOM KIPPUR	26	27	28
29	30					



Unidentified workman collecting fossil bones, mostly of mammoth, from Pit 9 at Rancho La Brea on May 23, 1914. Between 1913 and 1915, more than three-quarters of a million bones were collected from the "tar pits" by staff of the Natural History Museum. The small photograph shows J.W. Lytle sorting and organizing the riches of La Brea in the basement of the museum in 1921. Since 1977, the Rancho La Brea collections have been rehoused in modern facilities at the George C. Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries.



OCTOBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 COLUMBUS DAY
13	14 COLUMBUS DAY OBSERVED	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 HALLOWEEN		



A Monte Alban III urn depicting the Zapotec butterfly god wearing an elaborate headdress. Monte Alban, which was near the site of modern Oaxaca, was important as a ceremonial center for the Zapotecs from about A.D. 600 until it was abandoned about three hundred years later. The site is well known for its architecture and tombs. The museum's collections contain particularly fine material from prehispanic cultures of Latin America, and this object is part of an extensive exhibit in the Pre-Columbian Hall. The urn was an anonymous gift to the museum. Photographs by Dick Meier.



NOVEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5 ELECTION DAY	6	7	8	9
10	11 VETERAN'S DAY	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 THANKSGIVING DAY	29	30



This otherworldly face is from the center detail of the butt of a pistol from the 1700s. The pistol, a flintlock, was made in Germany by Bongarde of Dusseldorf and was part of a weapons collection donated to the museum by Colonel Arthur Goebel. The museum has an extensive collection of American and European weapons, which are important indicators of change in technology and decorative tastes. Photographs by Dick Meier.



DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 HANUKKAH	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 FIRST DAY OF WINTER
22	23	24	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27	28
29	30	31				

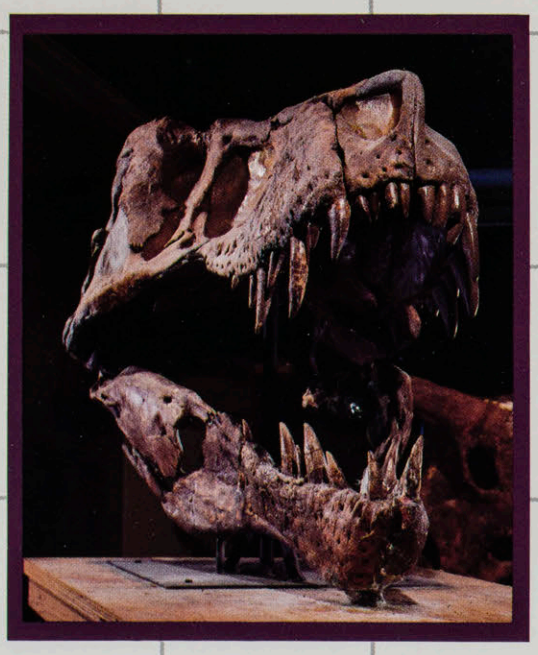


Benitoite, a beautiful deep blue gemstone that is found only in San Benito County, California. This cluster of crystals, about four inches in diameter, will be displayed in the new Alex Deutsch Hall of Gem Minerals and Their Origins, scheduled to open in the spring of 1985. The museum's mineralogy collection is especially strong in California minerals and native gold, gem crystals, and faceted colored gems. Photographs by Dick Meier.



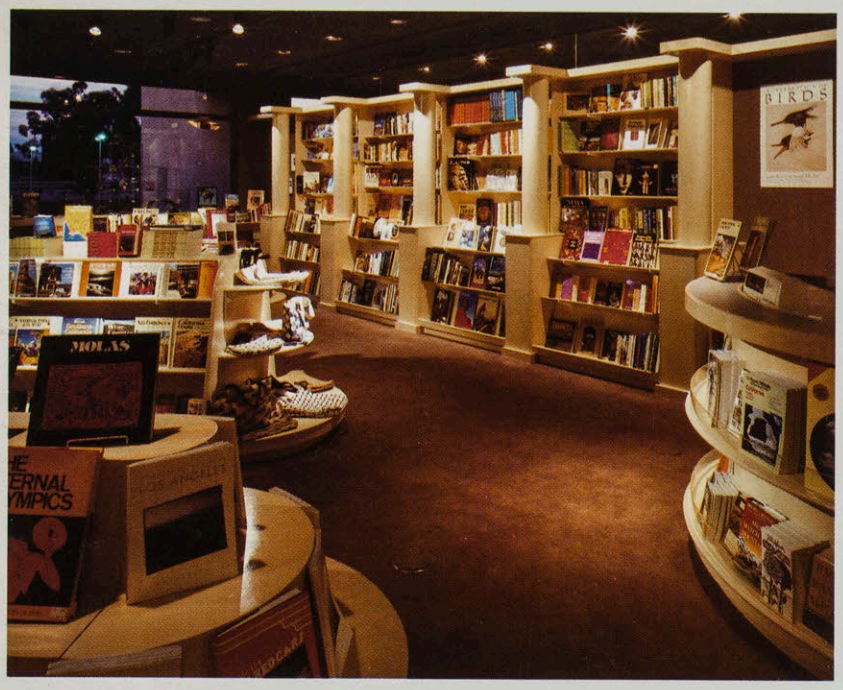
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19	20 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S BIRTHDAY OBSERVED	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



Tyrannosaurus rex, one of the largest predatory dinosaurs, lived at the end of the age of dinosaurs, some 65 to 70 million years ago. This skull, one of the largest *Tyrannosaurus* skulls ever found, was among many important dinosaur fossils collected in museum expeditions to Montana that were sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. William T. Sesnon, Jr., in the late 1960s. Photograph by Larry Reynolds.

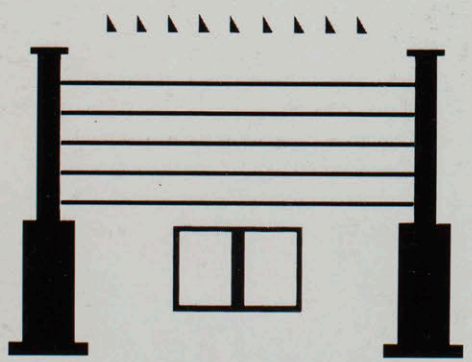
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Exposition Park, Los Angeles, California 90007



Introducing...

• THE NEW MUSEUM BOOKSTORE

A brand new, custom-designed Bookstore now graces the Museum's north entrance, directly across from the Ethnic Arts Shop. It's freshly-stocked with a wide variety of books and publications representing all areas of natural history. Also offered are fine nature cards, bookmarks, book plates, posters, and wonderful natural history gifts such as animal sculpture, rare prints, paperweights, and totebags.
Hours: 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., daily except for Mondays.



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